United Nations S/2002/496

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 April 2002

Original: English

Letter dated 30 April 2002 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 25 April 2002, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Letter dated 25 April 2002 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force (see enclosure). I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) George **Robertson**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-31 March 2002) there were just over 18,400 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia with contributions from all the NATO allies and from 15 non-NATO countries.

2. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) continues to contribute towards the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, monitor compliance by the Entity Armed Forces, conduct inspections and consolidation of weapons storage sites, provide support to the international organizations working in theatre, provide support to the Federation authorities in collecting weapons and ammunition in the framework of Operation Harvest, and monitor possible terrorist-related threats throughout the country. On 24 March, SFOR launched an operation around Brcko, Vlasenica, Srebrenica and Zvornik in the Republika Srpska to deter weapons smuggling.

3. Although the general security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable during the reporting period, the increase of inter-ethnic incidents, the poor economy and unemployment, demonstrations by Bosnian war veterans,[1] and increasing reports of surveillance of SFOR forces and facilities are areas of concern.

4. Ten cases of surveillance of SFOR facilities have been reported since the beginning of January.

5. Inter-ethnic incidents included the desecration of both the Catholic graveyard in Donja Dreznica (Mostar North), and the Serb cemetery in Cekrcici (Visoko). A bomb was thrown and damaged the mosque in Polje (in the municipality of Bosanska Dubica in Republika Srpska); an explosive device was detonated in the backyard of the Islamic community house in Janja (south of Bijeljina) causing structural damage; Bosnian Serbs were threatened with a pistol when attempting to claim their property in Rakovac (west of Tuzla); and a grenade was thrown into the yard of a house owned by Bosniacs, but currently inhabited by displaced Bosnian Serbs, and at a vehicle parked in front of a Bosniac's house in the Bijeljina area.

6. With regard to operations concerning persons indicted for war crimes,[2] a suspect was detained by SFOR troops on 31 March and subsequently transferred to The Hague. During follow-on operations to find Radovan Karadzic, a bunker complex was discovered in the area of Prijedor in Multinational Division (South West), and a weapons cache of eight tons of weapons and ammunition[3] was also found in Multinational Division (South West).

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

7. The armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina carried out normal training activities during the reporting period in substantial compliance with the military provisions of the Peace Agreement. Cooperation and coordination between SFOR and the Bosnian air forces on air traffic normalization continues. In addition, SFOR supported rescue and medical evacuation training at Sarajevo airport. Although there is a lack of equipment, the current training is seen as a positive step towards the creation of an effective search and rescue organization in the country.

8. During the period under review, SFOR troops conducted 93 weapons storage site inspections: 37 Bosnian Serb; 31 Bosniac; 14 Bosnian Croat; and 11 Federation.

9. SFOR troops monitored 287 training and movement activities during the reporting period: 168 Bosnian Serb; 109 Bosniac; 9 Bosnian Croat; and 1 Federation Army Department.

10. A total of 119 mine-clearing activities were monitored over this period: 39 Bosnian Serb; 56 Bosnian Croat; 8 Croat; and 16 Federation.

Cooperation with international organizations

11. Within capabilities and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the International Police Task Force, the Office of the High Representative, the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

12. SFOR continues to support the International Police Task Force in training local police special units. The second phase of the training started on 7 March and will conclude in October. So far, 228 special unit personnel from the Federation and the Republika Srpska have completed the course, which is being conducted within the Camp Butmir facility.

13. On 7 March, SFOR supported the Tribunal in an exhumation in the Bosanski Petrovac area; on 26 March, during an exhumation of some 10 bodies south of Brcko; and on 31 March, when a mass grave with 11 bodies was found in Sipovo.

Outlook

14. The overall security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is expected to remain stable.

Notes

[1] A draft law intended to revise the War Veterans' Law by reducing the 25 per cent of the Federation budget spent on military pensions has been withdrawn. Peaceful demonstrations by a majority of Bosniacs were held in Sarajevo. Members of Croat associations demonstrated separately at other sites.

[2] The Russian Federation confirms its special position on this matter.

[3] 1,897 x 40-mm anti-aircraft rounds; 235 x 120-mm mortar rounds; 28 x 76-mm mortar rounds; over 400 mines; and 10,000 rounds of small arms ammunition.